

demand there. Many beasts which it is hoped will be carried through are little more than walking skeletons and if they live will produce little next season. Calving losses will be severe.

To show the influence of conditions on dairy production, the following is the comparison with last year:—

Scheme.	Butterfat-production, in Pounds.		Decrease.	
	1944-45.	1945-46.	Pounds.	Percentage.
Mahia	43,604	40,816	2,788	6
Mohaka-Kahungunu	96,101	57,502	38,599	40
Poroporo	17,679	13,288	4,391	25
Te Araroa	60,385	45,360	15,025	25
Tuparoa	39,517	22,743	16,774	42
Waiaapu	190,567	127,333	63,234	33
Wharekahika	34,723	27,444	7,279	21
Average decrease	..	..	..	31

Fortunately, to offset the severity of conditions for cattle, the season proved healthy for sheep, except perhaps for a heavier strike from fly and, where there was no remaining water-supply, the inability to dip. With the lowering of the grading of fats acceptable to the works, picking could be done more deeply into the flocks. Cull lamb and ewe prices were poor as the drought extended its duration.

With the drying-up of streams which, within the knowledge of old residents, had never before ceased running, water for stock was a distressing problem. Animals, starved and thirsty, burst through fences and useless flood-gates and everywhere could be seen combing the roads. Unaccounted-for losses, when future tallies are made, will be inescapable.

In the northern area disaster spread in the wake of fires which raged over thousands of acres devouring pastures, fences, and buildings. Some 40,372 lb. of grass-seed has been purchased to reinstate pasture before second growth takes charge.

Supplies continue to be a handicap to extension work. Fencing and manure are the items in which short supply is most felt. Fencing-posts are obtained principally from the silver-pine forests of Westland at excessive cost. Freight charges are heavy for the northern area and, in the absence of shipping to Hicks Bay, impose undue cost, particularly on manure.

Over three hundred miles of rail and a further one hundred and twenty miles of difficult road freight nearly doubles the work's cost of fertilizer, and this, with the limited quantity available, precludes the fullest exploitation of the excellent land—some of the most fertile in the country.

The use of lime is not feasible to any great extent on account of freight costs, although large deposits of high-percentage calcium limestone exist in the Te Araroa area. It is hoped that crushing machinery can be installed and this essential soil dressing made available at reasonable costs.

Success can be said to have been achieved with the majority of units. Of these, some 10 per cent. have achieved the hoped for position of being able to control their own farming without further need of supervision, many having developed the land, paid off the departmental liability, and become eligible for leasehold tenure, preparations for which are in train.

The Department has again served as the selling agency for Maori producers of small crops, some 90 tons of kumaras and 10 tons of pumpkins being marketed. A demand for kumaras, carrots, and pumpkins has grown which the next year's crops will be insufficient to satisfy.